
REMARKS

This responds to the Final Office Action dated July 27, 2007. Claims 6, 12, 13, and 14 are amended, claim 30 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claim 35 is newly added. As a result, claims 1-21, 29 and 31-35 are now pending in this application. Detailed responses to the rejections are as follows:

Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 6-21 and 29-34 were rejected under a non-statutory double patenting rejection, specifically U.S. Patent No. 6,679,461 to Hawkins in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,172,097 to Arnold.

Applicant does not admit that the claims are obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,679,461. However, Applicant will consider submission of a Terminal Disclaimer upon indication of otherwise allowable subject matter.

Objection to the Specification

Applicant amended the specification as set forth above in the amendment entitled: IN THE SPECIFICATION. Applicant respectfully submits that the amendment addresses the objection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

Drawing Corrections

FIGS. 17A and 17B are amended. Element numbers 142 have been added to correlate with the flanges 142 recited on page 17, line 14 of the specification. Reference number 156 has been added to reference the elongate coupling member recited on page 17, line 14 of the specification. A replacement drawing sheet including FIGS. 17A and 17B is included with this Response. Additionally, an annotated drawing sheet showing the changes to FIGS. 17A and 17B is included with this Response.

§103 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,855,342 to Hawkins et al. (hereinafter "Hawkins") in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,102,089 to Burgess et al. (hereinafter "Burgess") and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,172,097 to Arnold (hereinafter "Arnold").

Applicant amended claims 6 and 12-14 to better recite the claimed subject matter. Claim 30 was cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. As for the remaining rejected claims, insofar as the rejection is applied, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection on several grounds. For example, Burgess relates to a pressure actuated switching device and is not directed to a support device adapted to support structures. Consequently, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection as improperly combining nonanalogous references. Furthermore, Applicant respectfully traverses the use of Arnold as nonanalogous subject matter. In contrast to the present subject matter, Arnold relates to a security box for mounting against a wall and for holding keys. Consequently, Applicant believes that the references are not properly combined in this rejection and requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 20 and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,855,342 to Hawkins et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,888,977 to Wong et al (hereinafter "Wong").

Applicant traverses the rejection on several grounds. Applicant notes the amendments to the underlying independent claims and traversals noted above and further respectfully submits that Wong additionally is nonanalogous subject matter. Wong relates to polymeric liquid metal optical switches and consequently is not directed to the same field of endeavor as the present subject matter. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the present rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 8, 10 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,855,342 to Hawkins et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 67,102,089 to Burgess et al.; and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,942,347 to Koncar et al ("hereinafter Koncar").

Applicant traverses the rejection on several grounds. Applicant notes the amendments to the underlying independent claims and traversals noted above and further respectfully submits that Koncar additionally is nonanalogous subject matter. Koncar relates to proton exchange membrane fuel cell separator plates and consequently is not directed to the same field of endeavor as the present subject matter. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the present rejection are respectfully requested.

Added Claim

Applicant added new claim 35 which is believed to be supported by at least FIGS. 17A and 17B of the specification. Consideration and allowance of claim 35 are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

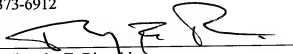
Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney (612) 373-6912 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: January 28, 2008

By


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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being filed using the USPTO's electronic filing system EFS-Web, and is addressed to: Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 28TH day of January, 2008.

PATRICIA A. HULTMAN

Name



Signature

ANNOTATED
SHEET SHOWING
CHANGES

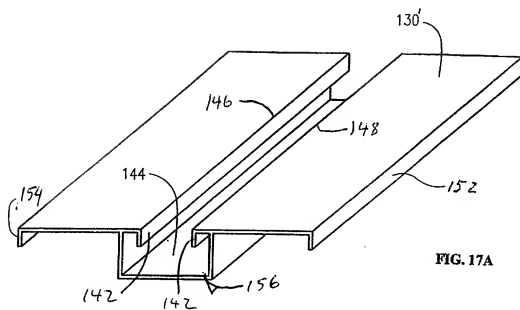


FIG. 17A

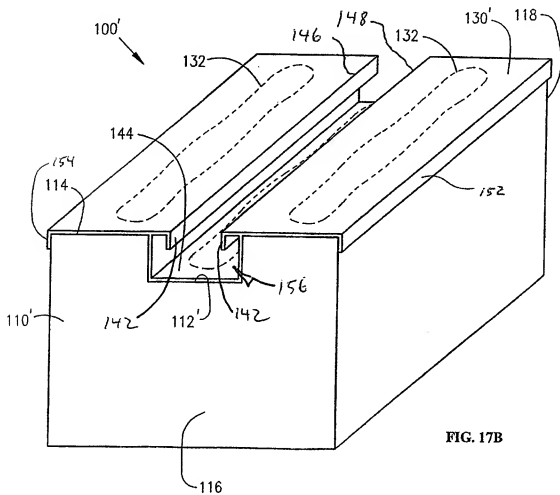


FIG. 17B